

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 3 – 7, 9, 11, 13 - 19. Please cancel claims 10 and 20.

1. (Currently Amended) A machine-implemented method for managing access to data, the method comprising the steps of:
 detecting that a database command is issued;
 wherein said database command requires access to at least one column in a table;
invoking a policy function which database metadata associates with at least one column in a table;
receiving an expression returned by invoking said policy function;
 rewriting said database command by creating a modified database command, ~~based on the database command~~ that incorporates said expression;
 wherein the modified database command specifies, based on the expression, whether to mask a value of the at least one column by returning a mask of the value instead of the value; and
 executing said modified database command.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1,
 wherein said database command requests at least two values located in at least two columns;
 wherein each of the two values are located in a different one of the at least two columns; and
 wherein the step of executing the modified database command includes at least returning at least one of the at least two values, and
 returning a masked value instead of at least a second of the at least two values.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~modified database command includes at least~~expression is
a condition expression ~~returned by a policy function.~~
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the masked value is returned for rows
that are retrieved for the database command issued,
that do not satisfy the condition, and
to which access privileges are granted.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
~~storing~~wherein said database metadata ~~that~~ associates a list of one or more columns
with a policy used for controlling access to the one or more columns; and
wherein the step of rewriting is performed if a match is found between the at least one
column to which the database command requires access and the list of one or
more columns.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~wherein:
~~storing~~said database metadata ~~that~~ associates a list of one or more columns with a
policy used for controlling access to the one or more columns; and
~~wherein~~ the step of rewriting said database command by creating a modified database
command is not performed if a match is not found between the list of one or
more columns and the at least one column to which the database command
requires access.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

creating athe policy function that returns a condition expression;
 wherein the step of creating the modified database command includes incorporating
 the condition expression and the database command into the modified
 database command.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
 creating a policy referencing the policy function and specifying trigger columns that
 trigger implementing the policy.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising registering athe
 policy function with a database server, wherein the policy function returns a condition
 expression and the modified database command is based on the condition expression.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium carrying one or more sequences
 of instructions, which when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or
 more processors to perform a method comprising the steps of:
 detecting that a database command is issued;
 wherein said database command requires access to at least one column in a table;
invoking a policy function which database metadata associates with at least one
column in a table;
receiving an expression returned by invoking said policy function;
 rewriting said database command by creating a modified database command, ~~based~~
on the database command that incorporates said expression;

wherein the modified database command specifies, based on the expression, whether to mask a value of the at least one column by returning a mask of the value instead of the value; and
executing said modified database command.

12. (Original) The machine readable medium of claim 1,
wherein said database command requests at least two values located in at least two columns;
wherein each of the two values are located in a different one of the at least two columns; and
wherein the step of executing the modified database command includes at least returning at least one of the at least two values, and
returning a masked value instead of at least a second of the at least two values.
13. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 1,
wherein the ~~modified database command includes at least~~expression is a
condition ~~expression returned by a policy function.~~
14. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the masked value is returned for rows
that are retrieved for the database command issued,
that do not satisfy the condition, and
to which access privileges are granted.
15. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 1,

wherein ~~the method further comprises: storing~~said database metadata that associates a list of one or more columns with a policy used for controlling access to the one or more columns; and

wherein the step of rewriting is performed if a match is found between the at least one column to which the database command requires access and the list of one or more columns.

16. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 1, wherein ~~the method further comprises:~~

~~storing~~said database metadata that associates a list of one or more columns with a policy used for controlling access to the one or more columns; and

~~wherein the step of rewriting said database command by creating a modified database~~command is not performed if a match is not found between the list of one or more columns and the at least one column to which the database command requires access.

17. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the ~~method~~steps further ~~comprises: comprise~~

creating ~~a~~the policy function that returns a condition expression;

wherein the step of creating the modified database command includes incorporating the condition expression and the database command into the modified database command.

18. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 7, wherein the ~~method~~steps further ~~comprises: comprise~~ creating a policy referencing the policy function and specifying trigger columns that trigger implementing the policy.

19. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the ~~method~~steps further ~~comprises~~comprise registering ~~at~~the policy function with a database server, wherein the policy function returns a condition expression and the modified database command is based on the condition expression.
20. (Cancelled)